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TROOP TOPICS

The Army's 179th Birthday

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY MARCH 1954

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THE ARMY'S 179TH BIRTHDAY

Purpose:

This issue is for use in observance of the 179th Anniversary of the Army's founding. Its purpose is to acquaint or remind soldiers of *some* of the Army's major activities during the past year. A knowledge of these achievements will help increase pride in our Army.

A Birthday for America's Oldest Fighting Force

One hundred and seventy-nine years ago, on 14 June 1775, the Second Continental Congress voted to establish an Army representing all the 13 American Colonies. Word had reached the Congress, meeting in Philadelphia, that Massachusetts militiamen had repelled British regulars who were on the way to Boston. Many delegates wanted to declare immediate independence from the British Crown; others doubted that immediate action would be wise. After days of debate the delegates finally reached agreement on one point—if independence ever was to be won, the Colonies would need an Army.

Thus, on 14 June 1775, Congress authorized 10 rifle companies "to join the Army near Boston, to be there employed as light infantry, under the command of the Officer in charge of that Army."

A Regular Army Is Born

The "Army near Boston" consisted of the "Minutemen." They were not soldiers of the Colonies as a whole but of Massachusetts only. The 10 rifle companies that joined them, however, represented all 13 Colonies. More than a year before America declared her independence from England, our first "regular" Army units were formed.

Since its founding 179 years ago, the United States Army has served the Nation continuously. It is the oldest of our military forces and the only one that has remained on active status since the Revolutionary War.*

* Both the Navy and Marine Corps, established in November and December 1775, were disbanded for several years following the Revolutionary War.

The Army has come a long way since that small beginning in 1775. The Colonial troops who fought under George Washington's command would be amazed at the many changes that have taken place. But one thing they would discover is still the same. That is, the *reason* for having an Army. The freedom that those early soldiers fought to win is the same freedom that we in today's Army stand ready to defend.

Birthdays are a good time for reviewing the past and looking toward the future. The past year has been an active one for the United States Army. Important progress was made in the field of new weapons. Improved methods of training have been developed to benefit from lessons learned on Korean battlefields. There has been a transition from wartime to peacetime in which the Army has undergone important changes of several kinds.

A year ago, the Army was in combat against forces of international communism. Truce negotiations in Korea, which had been in progress for nearly two years, were beginning to show definite signs of reaching a successful conclusion.

A Truce Is Negotiated

On 27 July 1953, United Nations and Communist negotiators signed the document calling for a cease-fire along the Korean battle line.

The truce agreement outlined the conditions for a political conference to be held later, and made specific provisions for the repatriation by both sides of war prisoners held by them. Provision also was made for those war prisoners who did not wish to be returned to their own country. Signing of the truce in Korea was considered by many as the year's most important single event. It was certainly an event of great interest for our Army.

New Problems Arise

The cease-fire in Korea left the Army with many problems—old and new. Combat and service troops in Korea got busy on the job of building new defenses along the truce line—just in case. The Army also continued to work at the vast relief and recovery job, feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, and generally restoring order in that war-torn land. The truce in Korea certainly did not mean that the threat of communist aggression had ended. The Army has planned its re-employment of troops and equipment with an eye toward possible new outbreaks of aggression. It also has been necessary for the Army to share in the general reduction of money being spent for national defense. The big job facing the Army is to manage itself so efficiently that

THE CITIZEN

For the people, my family, my fellows, my sons to come—I shall carry on. Whenever I am called, I shall come through. I am my country on the march. I am the ring of steel around Democracy, I am the Soldier-Citizen — the Nation in arms. I am the voice behind the cannon, the brain behind the tank, the nerves behind the plane, the heart in every bursting shell. Whatever the need, for the spirit of Liberty, for the future we're making—I the citizen, am the ultimate weapon.

For me today I have only one motto—
DUTY — HONOUR — COUNTRY

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it will remain strong even when it has fewer men and weapons, and less equipment than before. Our Army is going to be smaller and this means it has to be even better in quality than it used to be.

Research and Development

Some Army activities do not change much from year to year. Research and development is one of these activities. The Army's Research and Development program is presently spending approximately four hundred million dollars annually to get better, cheaper weapons and equipment for America's fighting men. The work is generally divided into two main parts: the development of new types of weapons and equipment and the improvement of types already in use. Altogether about 2,000 individual research and development studies are under way.

Rockets and Guided Missiles Hold Spotlight

During the past year much of our research and development effort has been devoted to guided missiles for defensive and offensive uses. Since the first American-fired V–2 rocket was launched on the flats of New Mexico in the Spring of 1946, the Army has made great progress in the improvement of guided missiles.

Some—like Nike (pronounced ny'kee)—were developed as antiaircraft weapons capable of tracking an aerial target through all its twists, turns, side-slips and banks, and knock it from the skies. Others—like the "Corporal"—are intended to be long-range artillery weapons for use against land targets.

The Army has announced that it will establish guided missile tactical units to protect key industrial centers throughout the country. The first of these, equipped with the Nike rocket for antiaircraft defense, is already stationed at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland—a short distance from Washington, D. C.

This development has opened a whole new field of military skills. At the Army's Redstone Arsenal, near Huntsville, Alabama, the Ordnance Corps operates the newest service school—the Ordnance Guided Missile School. Here, soldiers are learning to operate the intricate and complex mechanisms that launch and guide these weapons to their targets. The school is preparing men for repair, maintenance, storage and handling of guided missiles.

First Atomic Shell Fired

Among other significant developments in weapons during the past year was the firing of the first atomic artillery shell. This

shell, fired from the Army's big 280-millimeter gun, marked a most important advance in the field of infantry support weapons. It should be remembered that this is an "atomic cannon" only in the sense that the shell it fires can carry an atomic warhead. The explosion in the gun itself is not an atomic explosion.

Skysweeper Joins Antiaircraft Defenses

Another notable achievement in the arms program is the Skysweeper—an electronically operated antiaircraft weapon capable of firing about 45 rounds a minute. This weapon makes the process of locating, tracking and destroying an enemy plane almost entirely automatic.

Not All Achievements Are Dramatic

Not all the Army's Research and Development achievements are the dramatic and headline catching kind. But the improvements that do not get much public notice are still very important, especially when they affect the soldier's day to day living, give him better equipment, or guard his health and safety.

A typical case of improved equipment is the new signal wire now being used for field telephones. This new wire is cheaper and lighter, and can carry messages more clearly over longer distances than its World War II predecessor.

A new stove, developed by the Army Quartermaster Corps for combat troops, is lighter and more durable than the one used during World War II, and costs about half as much. After extensive testing by combat troops in Korea, this new stove was adopted for Army-wide use in the field.

The Army is now introducing a new series of radio equipment for use in combat vehicles. The versatile "Angry 3–8" series can be combined with other new equipment for use in teletype communications. Its main advantages are its tuning qualities and its compactness. Where the older sets had 120 channels—only 10 of which could be used at one time—the "Angry 3–8" series provides as many as 170 channels that can be used without pre-setting.

Army Developments Find Civilian Use

Many developments of the Army have found their way into civilian use. Army research, for example, played a part in the development of home television. A modern high frequency radio receiver developed by the Signal Corps is now being sold commercially—and Signal Corps-developed radio frequency power tubes are used in some railroad dining cars to cook food by radio frequency.

Training

Army training is always in progress on a large scale. Those who plan the training programs are constantly seeking new methods that will better and more efficiently teach the soldier the things he must know. In the past year several new devices have been introduced to improve and accelerate training. Lessons gained from the Korean conflict have also been incorporated into programs.

But the Army is aware that no amount of talking, no amount of demonstration can entirely substitute for *doing*. In the absence of the real thing—combat—there is no better way to train soldiers for their job of fighting than by field exercises that are as much like real combat as possible. This is why thousands of soldiers went into the field last year to participate in field exercises or maneuvers, both in the United States and overseas.

By these exercises, both commanders and troops learned much about their readiness for combat.

Army troops in Europe took part in large-scale training operations with troops of other North Atlantic Treaty countries. These exercises helped to strengthen our coordination, planning and logistics. They also helped the soldier in the field to understand more clearly his position in the vital role of defending the Western Allies against possible communist aggression.

American tactical units in Germany spent nearly 50 percent of their time in the field so that their soldiers could learn thoroughly how to stay alive in combat—and win.

Special emphasis was given during the past year to training in aerial supply and evacuation, tactical air support, over-water and over-snow operations, air-landing infantry operations and atomic warfare.

About 10,000 soldiers were added to the total who have received atomic indoctrination at Camp Desert Rock, Nevada. Combat troops took offensive positions within a few thousand yards of an atomic explosion and moved into the devastated area shortly after the blast.

At Little Creek, Virginia, the Army held its third sea-to-shore maneuver since World War II. In this exercise, the Army tested new ideas in shore assault and looked for answers to complicated landing and supply problems that are characteristic of amphibious operations. Defense and counter-measures against atomic and chemical weapons were also part of the training lessons on this maneuver.

Electronics Have Big Role In Training

Electronic devices are being used as training aids of various kinds. At the Army's Antiaircraft Artillery Replacement Training Center at Fort Bliss, Texas, two such devices help soldiers learn correct aiming and firing techniques before actually firing live ammunition on the range.

The devices are something like the gun-target machines found at amusement parks. Use of them already has saved more than ten million dollars in ammunition costs.

Electronic "brains" are being used to score the targets on some Army firing ranges. They automatically record and flash out the score every time a bullet pierces the target.

One of the Army's newest training aids is a simulated radar scope for teaching soldiers to track guided missiles, aircraft, artillery or mortar shells. The device imitates the "pips" of various targets, eliminating the need for actual planes or shells in such training.

Helicopter Takes Its Place As Frontline Fighter

No discussion of the Army's recent developments would be complete without mention of the helicopter. This versatile, hard-working aircraft has become a vital part of the Army's infantry-tank-artillery team.

The helicopter more than won its place on the Army's fighting team during the Korean campaign. Under certain conditions, as a carrier of supplies the helicopter can do twice the work of the two-and-a-half ton truck in the same period of time and over greater distances. It has increased the mobility of foot soldiers many times over. Its role as a life-saver in carrying wounded soldiers rapidly out of frontline positions is perhaps best known and appreciated.

The Army has stepped up training programs for helicopter pilots and maintenance personnel. Additional uses for the helicopter are being studied and tested.

The Army now uses three types of "copters." These are: reconnaissance, utility, and cargo. The cargo helicopters are classified by their lift capabilities as *light* (1½ ton), *medium* (3 ton), and *heavy* (5 ton). Units of seven branches of the Army include helicopters as standard equipment. Infantry, armored, and airborne divisions each have 10 helicopters. Non-divisional units of the Engineers, Infantry, Field Artillery, Signal Corps, Armor, Transportation Corps, and Medical Service, are assigned varying numbers of helicopters.

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More Combat Power With Fewer Soldiers

During the past year important steps have been taken toward more efficient use of Army manpower. The purpose has been to maintain and even increase, the fighting power of the Army, while at the same time reducing the total number of people in the Army.

A good example of this improved efficiency can be seen in our infantry divsion. Under the new table of organization and equipment, each division has 600 fewer men than before—but the division has more firepower. This was done mainly be eliminating many service jobs within the division, and adding 81 machine guns and 18 recoilless rifles to the total armament of the division.

Better Management Cuts Cost of Defense

A new property accounting system which will give the Army a means of keeping track of the dollar value of its property as well as the quantity, is being installed in depots within the continental United States. This system makes it possible to group together dissimilar but related items, according to their dollar value. It is an accounting method used by many private business organizations.

Plastics Find Place In Economy Drive

Another economy measure now widely used throughout the Army is the substitution of plastics for steel, aluminum and wood. Besides conserving critical metals, the use of plastics usually results in a lower cost item that is lighter and more durable than the item it replaces.

Plastic items now in use range from tiny buttons to land mines, fuel tanks, and harbor boats. Among the most familiar of the Army's plastic items are cups, bowls, tumblers, and the five-compartment mess trays used every day in mess halls.

A plastic footlocker, to replace both the barracks locker and the locker trunk used for shipping clothing and equipment, is now under study. Much lighter than its wooden counterparts, it will eliminate costly metal parts and minimize production problems.

Psychology Is Important In Economy

To help keep the soldier constantly "cost conscious," the Army uses many signs and slogans on items of equipment and in prominent places about his camp. They keep reminding the soldier of the dollar cost of national defense, and spur him to help the Army get the most value per dollar.

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Medicine For A Healthful Army

The health of each soldier is a vital factor in the Army's total fitness. The Army Medical Service, dedicated to making our Army the world's heathiest, is continually seeking better ways to prevent and treat illness, and to restore the wounded to duty.

In World War II, because of prompt and skillful medical care, the rate of deaths from battle wounds dropped far below that of past wars. Out of every thousand wounded American soldiers who reached battalion aid stations, 955 lived. This remarkable record was even bettered in the Korean campaign, when 978 per thousand survived their wounds, with 85 percent eventually returning to duty.

Army medicine has achieved comparable success in cutting down the disease rate among our troops, not only in Korea but throughout the world. Korea, however, was one of the toughest challenges in the realm of disease since the building of the Panama Canal. Doctors knew that from a medical standpoint, there could hardly be a worse place to fight than Korea, where many kinds of diseases were prevalent and local sanitation was extremely poor. Nevertheless, Army medical officers managed not only to hold the Army's disease rate down but helped greatly to reduce the disease rate of the Korean people.

Probably the brightest spot in our experience with disease was in the prevention and cure of malaria. Malaria has been of the most serious importance in every war in which our Country has been involved. Korea, with its mosquito-ridden rice paddies, was no exception. Because of its active research program, the Army Medical Service was able to furnish chloroquine as a malaria suppressant. It needed to be taken only once a week and never produced the toxic symptoms experienced by World War II soldiers who received earlier malaria suppressants. Meanwhile, research on a cure for malaria was going forward and in the summer of 1951 primaquine was developed under joint sponsorship of the Army Medical Service and the Public Health Service. The very low rate of recurrence among returnees from Korea bears out the fact that the combined chloroquine-primaquine therapy can now be relied upon as a standard cure for vivax malaria.

The Army Overseas

As of the time this is written, five Army divisions are stationed in Western Europe as part of the NATO defense army. Eight more American divisions are in the Far East. In addition to these,

numerous Army units and individuals are engaged in assisting the training of foreign troops in Latin America, the Middle-East and other parts of the world.

Helping Our Allies To Train

Aiding in the training of foreign nationals has become a significant activity of the United States Army. During the past year Army efforts in this field have been greatly varied, ranging from the NATO Defense College in Europe to teaching foreign armies the simple maintenance of thousands of items of U. S. equipment.

The Army is currently helping 20 Latin American Republics increase the efficiency of their armed forces. Army training missions are maintained and actively assist in the training of military forces in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela.

Besides helping to standardize military doctrine training and equipment, these missions help to outline military school programs, using methods and materials that have proved effective in the United States.

The Army has furnished similar aid to almost every one of our allies throughout the world. Great progress has been made in strengthening and training the armed forces of Greece and Turkey through Joint Military Advisory Groups in those countries.

Aid To The Republic Of Korea

One of the Army's most extensive training programs is now being conducted in South Korea. While the fighting in Korea has ceased, this fact does not eliminate the need for a strong, well balanced South Korean Army capable of defending itself against further aggression.

Our Army has made great progress helping the Republic of Korea develop its military force. Lack of a professional officer corps made it necessary to build the Korean Army from the ground up, and the development of leaders is still a controlling factor in the expansion of the Korean (or ROK) Army.

The ROK Army is developing into a compact, efficient fighting force with its own support units. To supplement our training of ROK officers in Korea itself, the Army has made available the resources of its school system in the United States. More than 600 selected ROK officers have attended U.S. Army branch and technical schools during the past year. These officers are regarded as the core around which an effective and largely self-sufficient South Korean Army is being built.

Conclusion

We have covered only the more outstanding Army events and developments since its last birthday. There simply isn't room to tell the whole story in detail. The achievements of any of the technical services or combat arms described in detail, would fill volumes. It is enough for us to keep in mind that the combined efforts of all the Army's branches are aimed at one target—to make the Army a better fighting team.

Many details of Army Research and Development, planning, and operations are necessarily in the top secret category. Only soldiers actually engaged in those activities know the details. Sometimes, on the other hand, important contributions go unnoticed because they are less dramatic than accounts of new guided missiles, atomic weapons, and electronic devices. But, every improvement—dramatic or not—has its place in the overall progress of our Army. Nothing is unimportant that helps to make the United States Army the best Army, and the American soldier the most effective soldier in the World.

PRESENTATION AIDS

This issue of *Troop Topics* reviews *some* of the Army's major activities of the past year. Limitations of time and space rule out any detailed treatment of the subject that would do justice to the achievements of all major units, combat arms, or technical and administrative services. This article touches on only a few of the more outstanding events and achievements. As is the case with most issues of *Troop Topics,* the information presented may serve only as a starting point in preparing a unit of instruction on this subject. Local events and achievements might be more suitable for your particular group. The importance of a rich unit history as a factor in unit pride and esprit is well known. What is not often emphasized is that unit pride is better fostered in soldiers whose knowledge of the Army goes beyond their own unit. In any event, the instructor must exercise his own judgment in preparing his presentation in the light of the commander's views, the type of unit, the state of training, and where his unit is stationed.

It is also suggested that this issue of *Troop Topics* might serve as the basis for a unit newspaper feature article or possibly a radio script for use in observance of the Army's birthday. All available media should be utilized in achieving the minimum standards for troop information as set forth in the quarterly guidance letter.

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AG 461 (17 Feb 54)

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

M. B. RIDGWAY,
General, United States Army,
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

WM. E. BERGIN,
Major General, United States Army,
The Adjutant General.

DISTRIBUTION:

Active Army:

As requested on DA AGO Form 12 for ARMED FORCES TALK.

NG: None.

USAR: Same as Active Army.

INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINE

Commander's Notes

News

Troop Topic: "The Army's 179th Birthday"

1. The Army is America's oldest fighting force.

a. First Regular units authorized on 14 June 1775.

b. The freedom they fought to win is the same freedom today's Army stands ready to defend.

2. Truce in Korea probably the year's most important event.

a. Transition from wartime to peacetime means many changes and new problems—

(1) New defenses along the truce line.

(2) Relief and recovery in Korea.

(3) Re-employment of troops and equipment.

(4) Reduced appropriations.

b. While becoming smaller, the Army has to be better than ever in quality to remain strong.

3. Achievements in Research and Development.

a. Rockets and guided missiles hold the spotlight—

(1) Nike and Corporal.

(2) First guided missile tactical unit at Fort George G. Meade, Md.

(3) Ordnance Guided Missile School at Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

b. First atomic shell fired from 280mm cannon.

c. Skysweeper joins antiaircraft defenses.

d. Other R&D achievements improve the soldier's health and safety, give him better equipment.

e. Army developments find civilian use.

4. Training has been improved and accelerated.

a. Training methods adapted to the lessons learned in Korea.

b. Field exercises and maneuvers tested combat readiness.

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(1) NATO exercises gave Allied troops practice in coordinated operations.
(2) Emphasis on aerial supply and evacuation, tactical air support, over-water and over-snow operations, airlanding infantry operations, and atomic warfare.

5. The helicopter—a new frontline fighter.

a. Won its place in Korea as part of the Army's infantry-tank-artillery team.
b. Training programs for pilots and maintenance personnel stepped up.

6. Economy measures.

a. More combat power with fewer soldiers.
b. Better management and a new property accounting system.
c. Use of plastics.
d. "Cost consciousness" indoctrination.

7. Medicine for a healthier Army — job of the Army Medical Service.

a. Improved techniques and operations contributed to record of lives saved in Korea.
b. Included prompt use of whole blood and plasma and cutting down disease rate.

8. The Army overseas.

a. Five divisions in Europe—eight in the Far East.
b. Army units and individuals also help our Allies train their troops.
c. In Korea, we are helping to build a strong South Korean Army capable of defending itself against further aggression.

9. Conclusion.

a. The combined efforts of all the Army's branches have one aim—to make the Army a better fighting team.
b. Every improvement and achievement is important because it helps to make the Army the best Army and the American soldier the most effective soldier in the world.

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For Valor

Medal of Honor

The Nation's highest military honor has been awarded to Members of the US 31st Infantry Division——

Once in World War II

T·P-(16)

Know Your Divisions . . .

The United States Army

31st Infantry Division

Fought in the Pacific in World War II, at Aitape, in the Wakde-Sarmi area of New Guinea, on Morotai, Mapia, and Mindanao Islands. Today at Camp Carson, Colorado, it maintains a T/O&E cadre ready for immediate expansion; also trains infantry and artillery replacements.

* * * * *

Activated: World War I, 25 August 1917, Camp Wheeler, Georgia. Reorganized as a National Guard Division 1923. Inducted into Federal service, 25 November 1940, Camp Blanding, Florida. Reorganized as a National Guard division 2 December 1946. Inducted into Federal service again 16 January 1951, Fort Jackson, S. C.

World War II Campaigns: New Guinea, Leyte

Present Commander: Major General Harry J. Collins

Shoulder Patch: Two red D's back to back, on a red-bordered, white circle.

Nickname: Dixie Division.